

What is claimed is:

1 1. An intracanal shield for positioning entirely in the ear canal and capping the
2 cavity of said ear canal, comprising:

3 a conforming perimeter adapted to fit in a retaining manner along the cross sectional
4 wall of the ear canal cavity,

5 a central porous member having pores sized for allowing air to pass through said porous
6 member while preventing passage of fluids and solids therethrough,

7 said intracanal shield, when fitted in said retaining manner in the ear canal cavity, being
8 positioned laterally with respect to a miniature hearing device medially positioned in close
9 proximity to the eardrum, whereby to protect said hearing device against penetration of fluids
10 and debris through said porous member while allowing air-borne sounds to reach said hearing
11 device.

1 2. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said intracanal shield is separate from
2 said canal hearing device for independent insertion and removal while said hearing device is
3 positioned in-situ.

1 3. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said intracanal shield is attached to said
2 canal hearing device for insertion into and removal from said ear canal along with said hearing
3 device.

1 4. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said porous member is hydrophobic.

1 5. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said porous member is oleophobic.

1 6. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said porous member comprises a
2 porous membrane.

1 7. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said intracanal shield is composed of
2 disposable material for cost-effective single use of said shield.

1 8. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said shield is at least partially
2 composed of polyurethane foam.

1 9. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said shield is at least partially
2 composed of silicone material.

1 10. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said pores are sized in the range of 1
2 to 10 microns.

1 11. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said intracanal shield is shaped and
2 dimensioned to be positioned deep in the ear canal past the hair and cerumen production area
3 therein.

1 12. The intracanal shield of claim 1, wherein said intracanal shield has an oval cross-
2 sectional shape adapted to fit comfortably in a cross section of the ear canal.

1 13. A hearing system fabricated and adapted to be positioned entirely in the ear
2 canal for extended wear, comprising:

3 a hearing device assembled and dimensioned to be medially positioned in the ear canal
4 and,

5 an intracanal shield shaped and dimensioned to be laterally positioned with respect to
6 said hearing device, so that said intracanal shield caps the cavity of said ear canal, said
7 intracanal shield comprising:

8 a conforming perimeter for fitting in a retaining manner along the cross sectional
9 wall of the ear canal, and

10 a central porous member for air ventilation with respect to said hearing device,
11 and having pores sized to prevent penetration of fluids and solids therethrough.

1 **14.** The hearing system of claim 13, wherein said intracanal shield is separate from
2 said hearing device for independent insertion into and removal from the ear while said hearing
3 device is positioned in-situ.

1 **15.** The hearing system of claim 13, wherein said intracanal shield is attached to said
2 hearing device for insertion into and removal from said ear canal along with said hearing device.

1 **16.** The hearing system of claim 13, wherein said porous member is hydrophobic.

1 **17.** The hearing system of claim 13, wherein said porous member is oleophobic.

1 **18.** The hearing system of claim 13, wherein said porous member comprises a
2 porous membrane.

1 **19.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein each of said hearing device and said
2 intracanal shield is disposable.

1 **20.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein said intracanal shield is at least partially
2 composed of polyurethane foam.

1 **21.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein said intracanal shield is at least partially
2 composed of silicone material.

1 **22.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein said pores are sized in the range of 1
2 to 10 microns.

1 **23.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein said hearing system is fabricated and
2 dimensioned to be positioned deep in the ear canal past the hair and cerumen production area
3 therein.

1 **24.** The hearing system of claim **13**, wherein said intracanal shield has an oval cross-
2 sectional shape adapted to fit comfortably in a cross section of the ear canal.

1 **25.** An acoustically permeative cap shaped and dimensioned to be positioned
2 entirely in the ear canal for extended wear therein to protect a medially positioned hearing
3 device within the ear canal against infiltration of fluids and debris, said cap being hydrophobic
4 and porous with pores sized to prevent fluids and solids from penetrating, but allow air-borne
5 sound passage, therethrough into the ear canal toward said hearing device.